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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2588
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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2007

In Today's Papers

Anti-Terror Supreme Board Gives Nod to Cross-Border Operation
All papers give extensive front page coverage to funerals for the 15 soldiers killed by the PKK, demonstrations against terrorism held at many universities, and the decisions of the Supreme Anti-terror Board. A statement issued after the Board meeting said that necessary instructions were given to all relevant institutions and organizations to take all legal, political and economic measures, including cross-border operation, to put an end to the presence of the terrorist organization in a neighboring country. Mainstream Milliyet reports that PM Erdogan, at the AKP Central Administrative Board meeting said that the government has started preparations to get authorization from the parliament for a cross-border operation. High-level AKP members told the paper that there is great possibility that after long holiday weekend coming up, the motion asking authorization would come to parliament. Defense Minister Gonul told the journalists that for a cross-border operation an authorization motion is required however, for hot pursuit, it is not necessary, adds the paper.

Following the Supreme Anti-terror Board meeting, US Ambassador Ross Wilson was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Under Secretary Apakan underlined Turkey's determination to take all kinds

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of measures. Sabah, Milliyet, Cumhuriyet and others quoted US State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack as saying "If there is a problem, Turkey and Iraq should cooperate to resolve it. I am not sure that a cross-border operation will lead to a long-term, lasting solution." US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Dan Fried said on the issue that the US has a lot to do to end PKK terrorism, such as pressuring the Kurdish regional administration and the relevant officials in Baghdad. White House spokesperson Dana Perino was quoted in Vatan and Aksam as saying "Turkish plans for a cross-border operation into Northern Iraq are premature".

Meanwhile, many universities across Turkey issued protest messages and held marches to denounce PKK terrorism.

Commentary: PKK terror/Iraq/US

Erdal Safak writes in the mainstream daily Sabah: "Let's hope that both the US as well as Talabani and Barzani realize that Turkey has really come to the point where patience has run out. We cannot afford to waste any more time on US stalling tactics like those of the last two years. During this period we have seen nothing more than promises. When PM Erdogan had a meeting with President Bush twenty months ago, he said that Bush seemed very determined to fight against the PKK. That led to the coordination mechanism against the PKK. Today there is no trace of coordinators, but the presence of PKK in northern Iraq has become even stronger than before. They have better weapons -- thanks to the missing American weapons. And they have better financial resources -- thanks to the cash flowing from Europe. Iraqi Kurdish leaders and the US administration should take the current picture as a final warning from Turkey and should take measures accordingly, before it is too late."

"Not Across the Border, Across the Atlantic Ocean"

Turan Alkan writes in the Islamist-leaning daily Zaman: "The US pursued a policy of negligence and showed reluctance to engage in active cooperation with Turkey against terrorism. Turkey on the other hand is having a problem because it did not take a clear stance with the US on this issue so far. Frankly speaking Turkey has lost its chance to finish off PKK terror through military means."

It was also very unfortunate that the DTP, in its parliamentary representation, showed reluctance to act moderately. The US and Turkey are in a struggle at the moment and the PKK issue is just the visible part of it. We have to accept the fact that the US is our genuine interlocutor on the PKK issue which has connections to both the EU and the US. "Cross-border operation" has become such a frequently used term, it has lost its credibility. If we have to

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talk about an operation, we should call it a "Cross-Atlantic operation." The AKP government should take up this issue with its sensitivities but act with determination. It should also free itself from clichs and the usual rhetorical approaches."

Armenian Genocide Resolution in Congress

All papers report that today the Foreign Affairs Committee of the US House of Representatives will debate the Armenian genocide resolution. As a last attempt to lobby against it, President Gul sent a letter to US President Bush saying that if the resolution is adopted it would cause problems in relations. TGS Chief General Buyukanit also sent a letter to his counterpart General Mullen and conveyed the same message. Mainstream Sabah reports that the Turkish Jewish Association took out ads in the Washington Post and the Washington Times today calling on Congress to "leave the job to historians"

Special Envoy Ralston's Resignation

Mainstream Sabah reports that US State Department Spokesman McCormack confirmed the resignation of counterterrorism special envoy retired General Joseph Ralston and added that he resigned due to personal reasons.

TV Highlights

NTV

Domestic News

- Haluk Koc and Gulsun Bilgehan, leading representatives of the opposition in CHP, met on Monday to discuss the possibility of joining forces before the party convention

- High school student Ridvan Dogan has been given two-year prison sentence for sending an intimidating e-mail message to Agos daily after the killing of Armenian journalist Hrant Dink. His sentence has been suspended.

- DTP deputy Ahmet Turk said military measures cannot help solve the problem of terror, and issued a call for initiating dialogue to end

fighting.

- CHP leader Deniz Baykal urged voters to boycott the referendum on October 21

International News

- Armenian Foreign Minister Vartar Oskanian said the acceptance of Armenian genocide claims can help Turkey face its past

- Two suicide attacks by car bombs killed 22 people in Northern Iraq on Tuesday

- The possible division of Jerusalem will be discussed during the Middle East peace conference scheduled for late November

WILSON